

Advisory Report

March 14, 2012

Key Efficiency
Opportunities Identified:

- No regular meetings of peer groups of local leaders in Sangamon County have been established.
- Literature and best practices in local governments indicate that collaborative efforts develop frequently through both formal and informal networks of practitioners.
- The CEC advises that formal, regular meetings of local leaders in like positions should be established, as a venue for cooperative actions.

The Citizens' Efficiency
Commission for
Sangamon County

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Recommendation of the Citizens' Efficiency Commission for Sangamon County:

Formalize **Leaders' Peer Networks** for Multi-jurisdictional Collaboration

Introduction

This report represents a formal recommendation by the Citizens' Efficiency Commission. All information has been compiled, researched, and validated by the CEC and its volunteers. The Commission expresses its hope that relevant local leaders will review the recommendation and take strides toward its implementation.

The Commission stands ready to provide assistance to the greatest extent possible in the review and implementation process. The CEC may be interested in further review of efficiency considerations that develop based on this advisory report, or of other recommendations that may arise.

Background

The idea of a regular and formal meeting of regional municipal chief executives, chief financial officers, clerks, and other similar positions has intuitive value. Without positive working relationships and interpersonal interactions, efficiency efforts arising from collaboration and coordination will be highly difficult to identify or implement. Although some peer groups have met in the past for beneficial collaboration, these meetings have not occurred in recent years. Local history indicates that peer networks would be of great benefit for good governance. Ideas for efficient and effective local governments can be shared and disbursed through professional interactions.

This intuitive observation is supported by the literature concerning interlocal collaborative efforts, in which the CEC and SSCRPC staff found that informal ties and networking often influenced collaborative successes. Morse emphasizes the importance of open communication and relationship building.¹ Zeemering indicates that cooperation can be consistent with jurisdictional self-interest and may help local

officials work toward an overarching public good.² Barnes suggests that “Responding effectively [to challenges of the coming decade] will require substantial amounts of trust building, deliberative processes, interlocal engagement, and hard thinking on the part of local leaders.”³

However, these interlocal peer collaboration efforts are not occurring. As Commissioners began their work of researching relevant units of local government, the CEC welcomed representatives of the various jurisdictions, as well as members of the public, to its regular meetings. In doing so, the CEC extended the invitation to all mayors and village presidents in Sangamon County to come together and provide input to the Commission.

A number of the mayors in the region were available to attend and provide comments at the CEC regular meeting of November 9, 2011. In speaking to those present at meeting of the CEC, Commissioners learned that previous attempts to create a Mayors' Alliance have produced no formal meeting schedule or recurring pattern of interaction among mayors and village presidents. At previous meetings of the Mayors' Alliance and at the CEC meeting, it has been suggested that regular, formal collaboration does not exist among the mayors of the various municipalities in the region, as well as among other groups of local leaders. This concept resurfaced at a meeting of the CEC with local mayors on January 30, 2012, designed to allow mayoral input into the CEC's research process and strength the network of local leaders.

Recommendation Question

Based upon these events and this research, the Citizens' Efficiency Commission developed a series of questions about local collaboration. These included:

- Would it be of benefit to local governments in improving efficiency and effectiveness for peer groups from local jurisdictions to have a stronger peer network and working relationship? (This question was answered in the affirmative by the literature and opinions expressed by local leaders.)
- How might the CEC facilitate more formal and informal networking among jurisdictional peers?

Alternatives

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission found that the intuitive nature of this recommendation, in addition to its on-going and fluid scope, indicated that the CEC's alternatives would be somewhat limited. One alternative would be for the CEC to formally set up the meetings among various jurisdictions. The CEC found it impractical to attempt to act as a coordinating agent for all groups, especially as it desires peer networks to continue to exist after the CEC's tenure.

Instead, the CEC determined that relaying contact information and encouraging local peers to meet would be the most beneficial course of action in its role as an advisor and facilitator for this opportunity for improved local government services.

The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission, which has been providing staff assistance to the Citizens' Efficiency Commission, has participated in efforts to bring together local chief executives in the past. The SSCRPC has expressed a willingness to facilitate the establishment of local leaders' peer networks to begin the process of bringing them together, so that they might transition to an on-going structure in the future.

Recommendation

In light of this research, the Citizens' Efficiency Commission recommends that Sangamon County local government officials formalize by intergovernmental agreement the existence of a cooperative venue or peer network and begin to meet on no less than an annual basis, with preference to a quarterly meeting schedule. This venue should allow peers from various jurisdictions who engage in similar tasks to meet, discuss common operations, identify areas of mutual assistance and cooperation, and address opportunities where services might be shared and efficiencies gained.

The involvement in this forum of the municipal chief executives, such as village presidents and mayors, should be required and formalized in city and village code. In addition, and formalized as part of this agreement, the municipal chief executives should produce an annual report so as to inform the public of collective and cooperative actions they have taken through this forum to create efficiencies or improve levels of service.

The CEC recommends that local officials consider meetings of personnel and officials in like positions, such as village clerks or treasurers, top level advisors, public works managers, and other peer groups in local government work. These alliances or networks should meet with the intention of fostering cooperative relationships among jurisdictions, sharing successful best practices for effective local government, and developing a "think tank" for the creation and implementation of better means of providing services within and between jurisdictions.

Steps Toward Implementation

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission recommends the following procedural steps toward implementation:

- Identify peer groups in local government for whom leaders' peer networks would be beneficial.

- Appoint a leader from each group to chair the meetings of the forums, as well as other officers as needed.
- Distribute networking and contact information to involved parties (see Appendices).
- Establish a convenient meeting time for all participants.
- Create a regular meeting schedule.
- Encourage municipalities to pass resolutions requiring and formalizing attendance at these meetings.
- Convene regularly for informal or formal discussion of collaborative possibilities.
- Regularly update contact information for peer groups as new candidates fill positions.
- Develop informational packets and contact disbursement mechanisms to facilitate new officials' incorporation into peer networks.

The Citizens' Efficiency Commission offers its support for these implementation efforts and looks forward to collaborating with the Leaders' Peer Networks. It has enclosed as an appendix a list of relevant personnel in suggest peer groups, with the most current contact information it has available for Chief executives. If the CEC can provide any further assistance in facilitating efforts toward cooperation, it would be pleased to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Karen Hasara, Chair
on behalf of the
Citizens' Efficiency Commission
for Sangamon County

¹ Morse, Ricardo S. 2005. Facilitating Interlocal Collaboration: Community and the Soft Skills of Public Management. Prepared for the 8th National Public Management Research Conference, University of Southern California.

² Zeemering, Eric S. 2008. Governing Interlocal Cooperation: City Council Interests and Implications for Public Management. *Public Administration Review* 68(4): 731-741.

³ Barnes, William R. 2010. Governing Cities in the Coming Decade: The Democratic and Regional Disconnects. *Public Administration Review* 70(Special Issue): S137-S144; S139.

Appendix A: Suggested Peer Networks and Relevant Officials

Chief Executive Officers

- Municipal Mayors
- Village Presidents
- County Board Chair

Chief Financial Officers

- City of Springfield Budget Director
- Sangamon County Auditor or Deputy Auditor
- Municipal Treasurers

Purchasing Agents

- City of Springfield Purchasing Agent
- County Purchasing Agent
- Municipal Purchasing Agents/Treasurers

Clerks and Administrative Leaders

- Sangamon County Administrator
- County Board Administrative Assistant
- Municipal Clerks

Public Works/Road Maintenance Leaders

- City of Springfield Engineer
- Sangamon County Engineer
- Sangamon County Building and Grounds
- Township Road Commissioners
- Public Works Directors from Municipalities

Human Resources Management Leaders

- City of Springfield Director of Human Resources
- Sangamon County Director of Human Resources
- Townships Supervisors
- Municipal Administrators

Township Supervisors

*Relevant officials assigned to peer networks subject to Chief Executives' approval. Contact information for Chief Executives (as of release of recommendation) attached as Appendix B.

Appendix B

NAME	JURISDICTION/TITLE	ADDRESS	ADDRESS 2	PHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS
Chief Executive Officers					
Joseph Powell, Mayor	City of Auburn	324 W. Jefferson	Auburn, IL 62615	217-438-2831	cityofauburn@royell.net
Sheri Sheppard, President	Village of Berlin	109 S. Jefferson	New Berlin, IL 62670	217-801-1952	
William Vetter, Jr., President	Village of Buffalo	600 South Main P.O. Box 109	Buffalo, IL 62515	217-364-4826	billvetter@illinoisalumni.org
Phillip Holler, President	Village of Cantrall	111 Canterbury	Cantrall, IL 62625	217-899-6667	carol.f@att.net
Thomas Gray, President	Village of Chatham	116 East Mulberry	Chatham, IL 62629	217-483-2451	tgray@chathamil.net
Richard Adams, President	Village of Clear Lake	331 East Wilcox	Springfield, IL 62707	217-753-2209	clearaday@mchsi.com
Robert Mathis, President	Village of Curran	4115 Van Deren	New Berlin, IL 62670	217-483-3300	CurranVillage@comcast.net
Robert Day, President	Village of Dawson	207 E. Elm, PO Box 301	Dawson, IL 62520	217-622-5355	villageofdawson@mchsi.com
Randy Rhodes, President	Village of Divernon	521 S. 1st St.	Divernon, IL 62530	217-628-3039	divvlg@comcast.net
Mark Woollen, President	Village of Grandview	2377 E. Reservoir	Springfield, IL 62702	217-582-3061	VillageofGrandviewIL@comcast.net
Bob Winters, President	Village of Illiopolis	302 Fifth Street	Illiopolis, IL 62539	217-486-5413	IlliopolisMayor@comcast.net
Harry Stirmell, President	Village of Jerome	2901 Leonard	Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-2203	jeromevillage@comcast.net
Rex Bangert, Mayor	City of Leland Grove	2024 Lindsay	Springfield, IL 62704	217-546-0739	lelandgroveadmin@comcast.net
Alan Mann, President	Village of Loami	602 N. Main P.O. Box 226	Loami, IL 62661	217-341-6868	al454mann@aol.com
Doug Trew, President	Village of Mechanicsburg	206 W. Main, P.O. Box 200	Mechanicsburg, IL 62545	217-891-1312	mechanicsburg@peoplepc.com
Stephen Frank, President	Village of New Berlin	301 East Illinois P.O. Box 357	New Berlin, IL 62670	217-488-6161	villageofnewberlin@mchsi.com
Jeff Clarke, President	Village of Pawnee	617 7th Street P.O. Box 560	Pawnee, IL 62558	217-553-3888	vpawnee@comcast.net
Jim Verkuilen, President	Village of Pleasant Plains	200 West 4th P.O. Box 177	Pleasant Plains, IL 62677	217-626-1004	villageclerk@casscomm.com
Bob Todd, President	Village of Riverton	1200 E. Riverton Road	Riverton, IL 62561	217-629-9122	btodd868@gmail.com
David Armstrong, President	Village of Rochester	#1 Community Drive - P.O. Box 618	Rochester, IL 62563	217-498-7192	dlaningham@rochesteril.org
Trevor Clatfelter, President	Village of Sherman	401 St. John's Drive	Sherman, IL 62684	217-691-7737	tclatfelter@shermanil.org
Nora Petrosky, President	Village of Southern View	3410 S. 5th	Southern View, IL 62703	217-381-3690	mkurtz@southernview.us
Brian Cuffle, President	Village of Spaulding	128 E. Route 54, PO Box 110	Riverton, IL 62561	217-629-8337	BCuffle@ameren.com
J. Michael Houston, Mayor	City of Springfield	800 E. Monroe, Rm. 300	Springfield, IL 62701		mike.houston@cwlp.com
Brian Wood, President	Village of Thayer	415 N. Washington, PO Box 14	Thayer, IL 62689		
George Murphy, Mayor	City of Virden	131 E. Fortune	Virden, IL 62690	217-965-4354	jberry@virdenonline.org
Tom Yokley, President	Village of Williamsville	141 West Main	Williamsville, IL 62693	217-306-0004	wville@gcctv.com

Chief Financial Officers

Kathy Stephens, Treasurer	City of Auburn	100 S. Jefferson	Berlin, IL 62670	
Rose McGowan, Treasurer	Village of Berlin	Box 109	Buffalo, IL 62515	
Jerry Olson, Trustee	Village of Buffalo	211 Canterbury	Cantrall, IL 62625	
Sherry Dierking, Treasurer	Village of Cantrall	116 E. Mulberry	Chatham, IL 62629	sdierking@chathamil.net
Debra Bloodworth, Treasurer	Village of Chatham	110 Clinton	Springfield, IL 62707	
Mary Bilyeu, Treasurer	Village of Clear Lake	6475 Gardner Rd	New Berlin, IL 62670	
Lacy Michael, Treasurer	Village of Curran	PO Box 167	Dawson, IL 62520	
Lucille Hundley, Treasurer	Village of Dawson	50 E. Brown	Divernon, IL 62530	
Lisa Cave, Treasurer	Village of Divernon	2377 E Reservior St	Springfield, IL 62702	
Cathy Mitchell, Treasurer	Village of Grandview	302 Fifth Street, PO Box 299	Illioopolis, IL 62539	cmitchell1122@yahoo.com
	Village of Illiopolis			
	Village of Jerome			
Matt Jennings, Treasurer	City of Leland Grove	2000 Chatham Rd	Springfield, IL 62704	
Gina Taylor, Treasurer	Village of Loami	602 N. Main P.O. Box 226	Loami, IL 62661	
Kimberly Kriener, Treasurer	Village of Mechanicsburg	206 W Main, P.O. Box 200	Mechanicsburg, IL 62545	
	Village of New Berlin			
Kelly Thein, Treasurer	Village of Pawnee	617 7th Street P.O. Box 560	Pawnee, IL 62558	
Mary Pat Hayes, Treasurer	Village of Pleasant Plains	200 West 4th P.O. Box 177	Pleasant Plains, IL 62677	
Tim Laffey, Treasurer	Village of Riverton	1200 E. Riverton Road PO Box 620	Riverton, IL 62521	timlaffey@yahoo.com
Jim Theis, Tresurer	Village of Rochester	#1 Community Drive - P.O. Box 618	Rochester, IL 62563	
Paul Palazzolo, Auditor, or Deputy	Sangamon County	200 S. 9th St	Springfield, IL 62701	
Jeremy Stuenkel, Treasurer	Village of Sherman	401 St. John's Drive	Sherman, IL 62684	jstuenkel@shermanil.org
Lisa Cave, Treasurer	Village of Southern View	3410 S. 5th	Springfield, IL 62703	
Darrell Macy, Treasurer	Village of Spaulding	128 E. Route 54, PO Box 110	Spaulding, IL 62561	
William D. McCarty II, Financial Officer	City of Springfield	Room 201 Municipal Center West	Springfield, IL 62701	william.mccarty@cwlp.com
Dolores Trader, Treasurer	Village of Thayer	214 E. Main St, PO Box 139	Thayer, IL 62689	
Justin Enrietta, Treasurer	City of Virden	101 W. Jackson	Virden, IL 62690	
	Village of Williamsville	141 West Main	Williamsville, IL 62693	